Biog Couve, Daniel 317

Chaplain Daniel Couve

An Ambassador of Friendship from the French Protestant Churches to America

An Ambassador of Friendship

NO one could be better qualified to assist in the process of drawing France and America closer together than Chaplain Daniel Couve, of the 59th Division of the French Army. "The Friendship between America and France," says Chaplain Couve, who has been visiting in this country since January, "is to me a thing so precious that I cannot conceive a worse calamity than the weakening of the trust and affection which unites us."

A Wearer of the Croix de Guerre

Chaplain Couve, who is one of the most influential Protestant leaders of France, served in the army for four years. He received the Croix de Guerre for being constantly in the front line trenches with his men because he "found them more receptive to the Gospel message when in danger." He comes as a delegate from the United Protestant Churches of France and Belgium to assist in the campaign to raise $3,000,000 for the relief of Protestants who were ruined by the German invasion and for the restoration of their destroyed churches.

"Hold Fast the Fruits of Victory"

"It is a vital necessity," says Chaplain Couve, "to strengthen the religious forces of France and Belgium at this critical hour, lest demoralization and despair sweep away the precious fruits of victory. The mothers of France say that 1,400,000 of their sons were killed in the war, and only 70,000 Americans, but if it had not been for the 70,000 Americans the 1,400,000 would have died in vain. They may still have died in vain if America withholds her invaluable aid from France in her difficult reconstruction days."

The Needs of the Protestant Churches

The Protestants of France, though few in number, have played a noble part in the history of their country, never more noble than in the present war. Fully half of their thousand clergymen fought in the army; 316 received citations for valor; over 100 pastors and theological students gave their lives for France. They have suffered grievously. One-eighth of their churches, including many of the

richest and most influential, were under fire in the industrial districts of the invaded north. Many of these were robbed and damaged, and some were totally demolished. "I was very much impressed in travelling through your country," said Chaplain Couve, "to see the beautiful service flags which hung in every church. But in France we had no such flags simply because every single man of our congregations under 48 was in the army. We kept lists only of our dead. Among the numerous service stars in your great churches there were always three or four gold ones. But every one of the *Paris Protestant* churches, which are smaller than these, had thirty or forty dead.

"Democratize French Christianity and Christianize French Democracy"

"The great need of France, in my opinion, is to make French Christianity Democratic and French Democracy Christian. Protestantism, through its history and tradition, is peculiarly fitted for this task. The French people are more open than before the war to a religious appeal. There are 20,000,000 Frenchmen, not vitally connected with any religious organization, many of whom have been moved by the beneficent activities of such religious organizations as the American Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. to a greater respect and interest than ever before in religion. It is to these that Protestantism has a unique opportunity to appeal.

"This appeal can be most effectively made by such interdenominational organizations as the McAll Mission and the Central Evangelical Society, which have proved by years of successful social and evangelistic work that they know how to win over the French working people to Christianity. If, in addition to this, American denominations wish to reinforce the work of their related denominations in France, this assistance will be gratefully and cordially received.

"Rekindle the Torch of Religious Freedom"

"But the immediate, pressing need of the French Protestant Churches is for emergency war relief. Their losses and sufferings obliterate denominational divisions, and call for an interdenominational movement of relief. It is our common responsibility to see to it that the torch of religious freedom, so nearly extinguished by the German invasion, shall be rekindled, to burn with a brighter fire."

Do You Know That

In the German invasion of France and Belgium many of the Protestant churches within the zone of military operations were pounded to dust heaps, reduced to mere piles of stones or left roofless?

One hundred French Protestant pastors and theological students were killed in the war and several times that number were wounded?

Refugees returning to their former villages and cities are without funds to supply their own bare necessities and helpless, therefore, to support pastors even if pastors can be found?

The French can not raise this money unassisted? There is no help left except in America, to which these refugees look as a land of bounty and generosity?

As the result of a request from all the Protestant organizations in France and Belgium to all the Protestant Churches in America, the Interchurch Committee for Christian Relief in France and Belgium is undertaking to raise $3,000,000 to heal the material wounds so grievously suffered. Its Executive Committee is constituted as follows:

Rev. John Y. Aitchison
Prof. Jean C. Bracq
Rev. Arthur J. Brown
Rev. W. I. Chamberlain
Rev. Francis E. Clark
Rev. Chas. S. Cleland
Rev. Henry S. Coffin
Mrs. James C. Colgate
Rt. Rev. J. H. Darlington
Rev. Wm. H. Foulkes
Rev. James I. Good
William A. Harbison
Rev. William I. Haven
Rev. Hubert C. Herring
Rev. William S. Holt
Mrs. Frank B. Kelly
Rev. Frederick Lynch
Rev. C. S. Macfarland
Paul G. McIntire
Rev. Frank M. North
Rev. W. W. Pinson
Rev. R. C. Reed
Edmond E. Robert
Wm. Jay Schieffelin
Rev. Charles J. Smith

Director of the Campaign, George O. Tamblyn
Advisor, C. S. Ward
Treasurer, Alfred R. Kimball
Headquarters: 289 Fourth Ave., New York City

How the $3,000,000 Will Be Spent

1. ***Rebuilding of destroyed church property***
2. ***Support of pastors and leaders***
3. ***Support of Protestant orphanages, hospitals and theological seminaries***
4. ***Christian evangelization***
5. ***Relief of Protestant refugees; restoring them to their homes.***